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SUBJECT: BROADER MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA INITIATIVE:
TURKEY PLANS DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE DIALOGUE MEETING ON
WOMENS' ISSUES IN JUNE

1. Summary: Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is planning a Democracy Assistance Dialogue (DAD) meeting focused on the role of women in society in Istanbul in June. The MFA appointed an ambassador-level BMENAI Coordinator in January. End Summary.

June DAD Meeting in Istanbul Focused on Women

2. According to MFA Policy Planning Department Head Tezel, the MFA is working with the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV), a local NGO, to organize a June conference in Istanbul focusing on the role of women in society. This will probably be the first event in the Democracy Assistance Dialogue (DAD), co-sponsored by Turkey, Italy and Yemen. Tezel said the MFA picked this topic because it is one "in which Turkey has a comparative advantage."

3. The MFA and TESEV will ask other Turkish NGOs and academics to participate. They will also invite foreign governments and NGOs. Tezel currently expects modest participation of about 30-40.

4. Tezel does not foresee funding will be an obstacle to the conference. The GOT, as host, will finance the costs of the conference and is considering funding some regional participants' expenses. Tezel said the UK has expressed interest in helping with funding and the GOT is looking into whether the G-8 has funds available.

5. The MFA appointed Ambassador Omur Orhun to a newly-created post of BMENAI Coordinator in January. Orhun has been OSCE Ambassador.
EDELMAN